

## ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides systems and methods for automating a search over a network such as the Internet. A user selects data such as text from within an application. The selected data is activated and a search is performed without the user having to leave the application. The search is performed while the user is continuing within the application. When the search is complete, the search results are made available to the user within the application from which the search was initiated. In one embodiment, the data is pre-searched and the results are cached such that the results are already available should the user desire. The present invention is particularly suited to integration with an operating system such that the methods of the present invention are thereby available to all applications. Alternatively, the present invention can be specific to a particular application.

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